

## Task Force Addressing Business Needs

### *Governor Forms Virginia Post-Attack Economic Response Task Force*

**T**he terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 on the World Trade Center in New York City and on the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, resulted in significant loss of life and property. In addition to the immediate devastating impact of the attacks, there has been a significant disruption of national and state economic systems, including financial, transportation, trade and tourism activities.



To assist the businesses and workforce of the Commonwealth in dealing with the adverse impacts of these terrorist attacks, Governor Gilmore established the **Virginia Post-Attack Economic Response Task Force**, chaired by Secretary of Commerce and Trade Barry DuVal. The Task Force, which had its first meeting on September 26, is composed of individuals from business, government, labor, public interest and professional associations from across the Commonwealth. It includes working groups organized around specific areas of identified need, including economic development, tourism, workforce, ground transportation, aviation, financial, agriculture, ports, charitable assistance, and legal services.

The Task Force will maintain a close working relationship with affected businesses, labor groups and communities and will continue its activities until economic, financial and transportation systems have been restored. The Task Force plans to submit a final report to Governor Gilmore by November 1, 2001.

Specific responsibilities of the Task Force include:

1. Assessing the level and nature of impacts on the Commonwealth's economy, businesses and workforce.
2. Developing and implementing a long-term economic response strategy.
3. Coordinating the provision of federal, state and private funding.
4. Providing technical assistance to affected businesses and communities.
5. Serving as a catalyst for public and private community partnerships to promote economic growth.

The Governor, by Executive Order, has directed the Virginia Employment Commission to take all appropriate steps to assist displaced workers, including the establishment of an help center at Reagan National Airport to assist workers in securing benefits. The Virginia Employment Commission, with the help of the U.S. Department of Labor, has also established a toll free number, 1-877-872-5627, for individuals who need general information about unemployment benefits eligibility and services available to displaced workers. Assistance programs are available to help with funeral expenses, medical costs, counseling, lost wages, and loss of financial support by calling the Terrorism Victims Helpline at 1-866-VARELIEF or 1-866-827-3543. In addition, DBA's Small Business Development division is working to provide additional manpower at local Small Business Development Centers in Arlington, Alexandria, and Hampton Roads.



For continuously updated information on the activities of the Virginia Post-Attack Economic Response Task Force and available assistance for businesses and citizens, a web site has been established at **WWW.VARESPONSE.ORG**.

### *A Message from the Director*

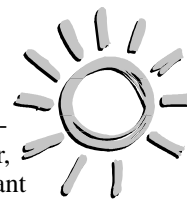
## Happy Birthday, DBA!

It's hard to believe that DBA is now 5 years old! Established July 1, 1996, DBA is Virginia's newest economic development agency. Our mission is to do three basic things: to help **strengthen Virginia's economy**, to serve as the **principal point of contact** between the business community and state government, and to provide **access to resources** to enhance success. Toward these ends the staff at DBA has put up "large numbers" in serving our customers. **Existing Business Services** has made nearly 11,000 company visits and responded to 25,000 requests for assistance. **Workforce Services** has provided for the training of over 97,000 Virginians. **Financial Services** has facilitated over \$200 million in public and private financing. And the **Small Business Development Center Network** has served its 100,000<sup>th</sup> client during its history. Our **economic development seminar series** continues to educate our colleagues, **Business Appreciation Week** has statewide appeal and significance, and a new **incubator program** is well established and is leveraging \$6.88 in funding for each \$1 we have put into the program. All of this and much more has been wrapped-up in our new business-friendly **website**, which is receiving rave reviews! The DBA staff accomplishes these services as well as other responsibilities that are prescribed in 32 state and federal mandates. So it is indeed a Happy Birthday celebration for which many can be thankful. As Director, I applaud the work done each day by the men and women of DBA! We collectively appreciate the opportunity to serve Virginia's robust business community. Many thanks to all who help us secure the resources we need to make a positive impact on the Virginia economy.

## News from the Workforce Services Division

**LASCO Shines Bright in Southside Virginia**

LASCO Bathware of South Boston is adding an additional 110 jobs to their workforce! LASCO's South Boston manufacturing plant opened its operations in December 1985 with 40 employees. Almost 16 years later, after two expansions, it now has over 400 employees. Of LASCO's nine plants, South Boston is the only plant that produces all LASCO products. They manufacture fiberglass and acrylic bathtubs, shower stalls and whirlpool tubs. These 110 jobs are a result of an expansion with the purchase of a new vacuum former and a CNC automated cutting robot. DBA's Workforce Services division assisted LASCO in 1985 and will again assist them in recruitment and training of these new employees. Workforce Services will conduct Train the Trainer classes and expects to update the original orientation video produced in 1985. Workforce Services will also assist LASCO in costs associated with recruitment, instructor travel, on the job training and training manuals.



## Upcoming Events

**Savor Virginia!**

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will present the **Virginia Food and Beverage Expo** on Wednesday, **March 20, 2002**, at the Greater Richmond Convention Center in downtown **Richmond**. The Expo is an opportunity for Virginia food and beverage companies to sell their products to buyers in many segments of the food industry. It is not a consumer event and is only open to food industry professionals.

According to a survey done after the 2000 Expo, exhibitors made total sales of up to \$1 million as a result of the show. Between 600 and 1,000 buyers from VA, NC, PA, NJ and beyond are expected, representing more than 250 specialty gourmet shops, stores and markets, grocery store chains, food service establishments, hospitality businesses, gift shops, gift basket companies, and brokers and distributors. Exhibitors will include up to 100 Virginia companies which offer food and beverage products produced or processed in Virginia with product labels featuring a Virginia address. For additional information, contact Anita Showers at VDACS at (804) 371-7682 or [ashowers@vdacs.state.va.us](mailto:ashowers@vdacs.state.va.us).

**Inside Virginia: The Right Stuff**

Due to the catastrophic events in Arlington County and New York City on September 11, DBA decided to cancel the September 12 Virginia Economic Development Seminar in Fairfax. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused, but felt we had the best interest of our attendees in mind.

Since there was strong interest in the topics to be covered at the September seminar, we have included some elements in our December agenda. The upcoming seminar will feature a look at Virginia's **economy**, its economic base and growing and declining industry sectors; an overview of Virginia's **incentives** and a comparison with those of our competitors; an explanation from an international site consultant of how Virginia is positioned in the world and what our **clients and prospects** think about Virginia; and a **macro-economic** look at the future of our economy.

Don't miss the next **Virginia Economic Development Seminar**, which will be held **December 5** at the Holiday Inn Select Koger Center South in **Richmond**, VA. Invitations will be sent out in the next few weeks, but for more information on this seminar and other business-related events across Virginia, call (804) 371-0371 or visit **WWW.DBA.STATE.VA.US**.



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